

Chapter 22

Humanizing Online Assessment: Screencasting as a Multimedia Feedback Tool for First Generation College Students

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the author will investigate the use of screencasting as a multimedia feedback tool in two classes— a college level introduction to literature class, and a computers across the curriculum class geared towards K-12 preservice teachers. After situating the concepts of modeling and feedback strategies within seminal and contemporary scholarships, the author will provide a practical and anecdotal narrative of the uses of screencasting as an assessment tool within the frame of literacy pedagogies. In identifying the ways in which screencasting (video feedback) can be leveraged to enhance personalized instruction, the author will examine: 1) how technology can be used as a literacy practice; and 2) how a teacher preparation professor can model the practice of technology as a literacy for assessment purposes.

INTRODUCTION

The difficulty in teaching coursework in higher education continues to be, in addition to motivation and access, the struggle to build a positive relationship and trust between instructor and student. As Couros (2015) noted in *The Innovator's Mindset*—50 years ago teaching was about relationships, and 50 years from now it will continue to be so. These relationships are particularly important when assessing student work—without a trusting relationship, students may find detailed and critical feedback overwhelming. First Generation College Students (FGCS)—those who are the first in their families to attend college (Wiggins, 2011)—could benefit from these relationships in particular. These students tend to come to college with a.) little experience in college-level and online coursework and b.) insecurity in their writing skill (Wiggins, 2011). In this chapter, the author will identify the ways in which she has built relation-

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ships through individualized assessment of student work in both a face-to-face Introduction to Literature course as well as an online Computers Across the Curriculum course geared towards preservice teachers. In investigating these two courses, the author will a) identify how the use of screencasting functions as a form of multimedia feedback, b) elaborate on how technology can be used as a literacy practice, not necessarily as simply a tool, and c) how a teacher preparation professor can model the practice of technology as a literacy for assessment purposes.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this section is multifaceted. First, framing the pedagogical approach of modeling and effective feedback strategies is essential before diving into the ways in which screencasting can be used for student writing feedback in the remainder of the chapter. It is also important to identify how recent scholarship treats various forms of feedback methods. Within the scholarship, the author will pinpoint ways in which technology and digital platforms are positioned in the use of effective feedback methods as well as how first generation college students, in particular, might be affected by this form of instruction.

Modeling, within the paradigm of social constructivism, is considered an essential form of teaching—the strategy dates back to Bandura (1977) and has long since been viewed as an effective way to teach in multiple content areas (Dennen, 2003; Hansen, 2007; Hicks, 2013). Modeling is a performance of a desired target behavior (Besler & Kurt, 2015). Bandura (1977), among other notable social learning theorists such as Vygotsky (1962), continuously cited the power of observational learning throughout their academic and philosophical careers. Highlighted within Social Learning Theory is the view that learning is a continuous, reciprocal relationship between various factors, one of which is cognitive in nature (Bandura, 1977). Language is highlighted as an essential process of learning within the Social Learning Theory (also known as Social Constructivism), (Vygotsky, 1962) as opposed to cognitive theories that viewed language as a form of labeling, not a form of learning (Piaget, 1959). It serves to note that language is multifaceted in and of itself, and includes not only written forms of communication but also speaking and listening—all of which can be leveraged in both face-to-face and digital modeling.

Modeling also provides a platform for students to begin their work (Hicks, 2013). Professors and teachers continue to use modeling as they accept drafts and work to provide feedback—this is viewed as assessment as learning (Lee, 2017). For example, teachers might model the structure of a sentence, or provide a model for how to reframe a piece of narrative (Lee, 2017). Modeling can be either face-to-face or digital—in fact, there are various studies, such as Besler and Kurt's (2015) investigation of video modeling for students with autism, which showcased the effectiveness of digital video modeling. The mothers of three autistic boys (aged 4 to 6) were able to use video modeling with high integrity to develop a targeted skill. Within teacher preparation, scholars such as Kajder (2006) and Tendero (2006) highlighted the need to model not only effective digital composition (such as multimedia digital storytelling) but also model the skills to select appropriate digital platforms for writing. These studies all rest on the premise that in order to engage in 21st century skills, students must not only use digital platforms but professors must model the use of these platforms effectively (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012). 21st century skills, although posited as technologically bound, include notions of creativity and problem solving skill as well (Urbani, Roshandel, Michaels, & Truesdell, 2017), which can be applied to a variety of more traditional academic tasks such as text analysis.

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